

From the NHDES Public Pool and Spa Program

A Summary of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (Act) promotes the safe use of pools, spas and hot tubs by imposing mandatory federal requirements for suction entrapment avoidance.

Effective December 20, 2007, the Act is being administered by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRAPMENT AVOIDANCE MUST BE MET BY:
December 19, 2008

The Act requires:

Safety Drain Covers. Each swimming pool or spa drain cover manufactured, distributed, or entered into commerce in the United States shall conform to the American National Standard ASME A112.19.8 - 2007 Suction Fittings for Use in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas, and Hot Tubs published by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). Compliance with this Standard will be enforced by the CPSC as a consumer product safety rule.

Public Pool Drain Covers. Each public pool and spa (as defined), both new and existing, shall be equipped with drain covers conforming to the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8 - 2007 Standard described above.

Public Pool Drain Systems. Each public pool and spa (pump) with a single main drain, other than an unblockable drain, shall be equipped with one or more additional devices or systems designed to prevent suction entrapment that meet the requirements of any applicable ASME/ANSI Standard or applicable consumer product safety rule.

In addition to a compliant drain cover, such additional devices or systems include:

1. **safety vacuum release system (SVRS):** A safety vacuum release system which ceases operation of the pump, reverses the circulation flow, or otherwise provides a vacuum release at a suction outlet when a blockage is detected, that has been tested by an independent third party and found to conform to ASME/ANSI standard A112.19.17 or ASTM standard F2387.
2. **suction limiting vent system:** A suction-limiting vent system with a tamper- resistant atmospheric opening.
3. **gravity drainage system:** A gravity drainage system that utilizes a collector tank.
4. **automatic pump shutoff system:** An automatic pump shut-off system.
5. **drain disablement:** A device or system that disables the drain.*
6. **other system:** Any other system determined by the Commission to be equally effective as, or better than, the systems described in subclauses (I) through (V) of this clause at preventing or eliminating the risk of injury or death associated with pool drainage systems.

*Drain disablement may drastically impact the circulation, filtration and disinfection system. Such action may make it impossible or difficult to maintain the water quality standards set forth in NH Administrative rules, Env-Wq 1100. The NH Department of Environmental Services (“DES”) requires that any proposed changes to the structure and/or circulation system must be submitted to the DES for approval prior to initiating any work.